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CIJE Goals Seminar proceedings. Days 1 to 5, undated.

GOALS SEMINAR: DAY 1 PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

The morning began with words of welcome from Alan Hoffmann. Alan recalled for the group the decision on the part of the Mandel Commission on Jewish Education to avoid the issue of substantive goals for Jewish education. The basis for this avoidance was the belief that addressing this kind of a substantive issue would destroy the Commission: the views of the Commissioners on matters of substance were so disparate and at odds, there was good reason to think that no good purpose would be served by focusing on them at a time when the challenge was to work towards a shared agenda for the improvement of Jewish education in North America. At the same time, it was recognized by everyone that in the aftermath of the Commission, the issue of substantive goals for Jewish education would have to be addressed. Increasing the number of full-time educators or the number of children who get to Israel are goals of an important kind; and so is the larger goal of changing demographic trends. But these kinds of goals cannot substitute for substantive educational goals -- that is, for goals that identify the kinds of skills, attitudes, understandings, and approach to life one would hope to guide the young towards. Indeed, if the problem of Jewish continuity in North America is to be effectively addressed, getting clearer about our goals and trying systematically to achieve them will prove critical.

Alan indicated that the seminar represents the beginnings of a process in which we jointly explore the various issues that need to be understood and addressed. While the seminar should help us clarify the issues and our agenda, it will not eventuate in neat formulas. Alan also commented on the rich diversity of the group: lay/professional, different denominational affiliations, different communities, different kinds of institutions, etc. Such diversity promises to enrich the seminar in numerous ways.

This last point was reiterated by Seymour Fox in his words of introduction. Seymour went on to speak of the background to the Goals Project. He referred to the way in which near the turn of the century the Flexner Report turned medical education on its head, and he expressed the hope that the work of Mandel Commission had launched a similar revolution in Jewish education.

No sooner was the work of the Commission over than the Educated Jew Project was launched. The reason was simple: in a world like our own, where we can choose whether to remain Jewish or not, Jewish education must frontally address the "Why remain Jewish?" question. If they are to reach the young and engage them they must initiate them into forms of Jewish existence that they will find so meaningful that they will win out in the competition with other forms of life that may beckon. What this means is that these educating institutions must seriously ask the question: towards what kind of an individual and towards what kind of a society are we educating? The "Educated Jew" Project is designed to produce a variety of answers to this question, answers which can serve as guides, as resources, or as foils for communities, institutions, and individuals in process of developing their own answers to such questions.

Seymour underscored his point concerning the importance of having a powerful vision with reference to general education. According to the work of Mike Smith, now Under-Secretary of

Education and former Dean of the Stanford School of Education, Troubled by the fact that most reform efforts failed, Smith looked carefully at those that succeeded. What he found: the presence of a powerful vision, internalized by the staff and reflected in the institution's goals and daily life, was the critical variable. Not only, Seymour added, does the presence of a compelling vision and associated goals make for greater effectiveness, it's also a condition of accountability -- the kind of accountability that is increasingly being demanded of Jewish educating institutions by the agencies and leaders that are looking to them to improve our situation.

Following Seymour's introductory comments, Daniel Pekarsky walked participants through the scheduled program. He noted that the seminar was designed to offer participants an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the kinds of problems to which the Goals Project is a response; to work towards a shared set of concepts, assumptions, and issues that would establish a working universe of discourse,; to better understand what it means to speak of an institution as vision-driven by looking at a number of such institutions; to look carefully, but with attention to alternatives, at Moshe Greenberg's vision of an educated Jew as a way of a) developing a deeper understanding of what enters into a vision and b) reflecting on the difficult task of moving from vision to the design of an educational environment. In the last days of the seminar focuses on how institutions might approach the process of become more vision-driven and goals-oriented than many now are, as well as on the important question of what participants in the seminar and CIJE can do when the seminar is over to help catalyze progress in this arena. Addressing this question is one of the issues that the Community-based work groups will be struggling with.

Daniel ended his comments by asking participants to be sure to fill out the biographical information sheet included in the packet of materials. Please try to return it by Monday evening.

PRESENTING THE PROBLEM

The structure of this session was as follows: participants were given a series of general statements, some positive and some negative, concerning the place of goals in Jewish education, and they were asked to offer examples from out of their own experience of the different generalizations. In the context of discussing these examples , various dimensions of the goals-problem in Jewish education emerged. In addition to helping to articulate this problem, the exercise was intended a) to encourage participants to use the lens of goals to review educational settings they are familiar with, b) to emphasize the importance of using their own experience to test out claims or hypotheses considered in the seminar; and c) to highlight the fact that the picture in Jewish education is not all bad -- that in fact some good things have been and are happening. It is important to note in this connection that a variety of positive examples were discussed in this session, but because the focus of the session was on "the problem", these examples are not highlighted below. (This said, it's important to note that there is a lot to be learned from such success-stories! They may well be worth returning to.) Below are some of the points discussed in this session:

No goals- or vague goals - informing the educational process. The initial point made under this heading is that oftentimes educators are handed teaching assignments without any specification of the goals to be achieved. They may, for example, be told to "teach Bible," as though it were self-evident what educational goals are to be worked towards in the study of Bible. But this is far from

true: the Bible could be used as a vehicle of numerous and varied educational goals -- as a vehicle of teaching reading skills or interpretive skills; as a vehicle of encouraging certain attitudes or beliefs; as a vehicle of learning about history, or about theology, etc. To say "Teach Bible," unless the context is one that make it very clear what that means, is to leave up to chance what will actually be the focus of instruction.

Sometimes there are goals, but they may be very vague goals like "a strong Jewish identity," which, acceptable though they be, don't offer much practical guidance. We spoke in this connection about two matters worthy of emphasis:

a. that lay-leaders and professional educators sometimes talk about the aims of Jewish education using very different kinds of language. Whereas lay leaders may use language like "strong Jewish identity", professional educators may be inclined to use much more concretely focussed concepts to define their mission. There is a need for these groups to talk to each other about goals in more fruitful ways.

b. While vaguely expressed goals may sometimes grow out of unawareness that what is being expressed is very vague, there are times when vagueness is more deliberate. The more general, the more vague the language in which a goal is expressed, the easier it is to galvanize consensus around it. But at a price! The price is that the goal fails to offer significant guidance for the educational enterprise. For it's consistent with numerous interpretations. [Ideals expressed in vague language may also serve another purpose: they may allow us to avoid thinking through carefully what we ourselves really believe. It's easy to say that I'm for "a strong Jewish identity;" it's much harder to offer a serious interpretation of what that means to me.

Goals that are inadequately embodied in the life of the institution. The general point here is that while one can point to activities in the curriculum that correspond to goals, the relationship of means to ends is often seriously problematic. That is, if one looks honestly at what's being done, it becomes apparent that it's highly unrealistic to imagine that the activities in place are likely to realizes the goals in question.
In fact, there are times when a careful scrutiny of what's being done might lead one to the conclusion that our efforts are actually counter-productive.

To approach a goal seriously is to step back and to ask: "If we're really serious about trying to realize this goal, what would we really have to do?" This might involve careful clarification of the goal as well as a systematic effort to reflect on the kinds of experiences and settings that would be likely to make goal-attainment a reasonable prospect. To work seriously towards the achievement of a particular goal may require an enormous amount of effort and significant transformations of the educational environment.

This point gave rise to the suggestion that educational institutions are more likely to be effective if they limit themselves to a few carefully conceived goals, rather than to address a whole lot of them. For the result of the latter is that they may end up not doing justice to any one of them.

To concentrate on just a few central goals is to make it possible to organize the institution's energies and resources around their achievement in a way that would be impossible if there were many goals. Reference was made in this connection to David Cohen et. al.'s book THE SHOPPING MALL HIGH SCHOOL, which describes the way in which American high schools avoid deciding what's really worth teaching and learning by incorporating every which goal and subject.

This comment prompted the observation that institutions - educational and otherwise -- are well know to add new goals and priorities; but they find it much more difficult to subtract priorities -- that is, to say that in order to concentrate on X, which we now realize is really critical, we will no longer emphasize Y and Z.

Are the goals compelling to the stakeholders? The next set of generalizations focused on whether or not key stakeholders themselves identified strongly with the goals that define the work of the institution. According to Senge, unless people are strongly identified with a goal, they are unlikely to work hard towards its achievement -- especially when the going is rough. Conversely, if they are really committed to the goal, they are likely to approach the effort with a seriousness and ingenuity that may be very powerful in its effect. The reality in Jewish education is that many stakeholders, including key educators, often don't identify at all, much less very strongly, with the beliefs and norms of the institution in which they are teaching.

This point brought forth a number of issues, including the following:

1) given realities in the field, it may be difficult to find educators share the institution's outlook (but here the question was raised: do institutions invest much energy in guiding the educators that work for them towards a serious appreciation of the institution's goals and outlook?)

2) When one asks, "Are the goals compelling to the key stakeholders, who does one have in mind? Whose goals are they? To what extent do they reflect views of the frontline educators or the views of the parents? And to what extent are efforts made to get these categories of individuals to understand and identify with the institution's priorities and aspirations? In this connection, the point was made that parents are sometimes viewed by educators as "the pollution" which children need to be protected against; whereas in fact they should be regarded as part of "the solution". The point here is that efforts to educate parents concerning the institution's goals and to elicit their understanding and support are far more likely to be helpful than are efforts to simply try to ignore or to compete with what children get at home.

In the course of this discussion, a number of other points were put on the table:

1. Issues relating to pluralism. Educating institutions that are committed to the acceptance of diversity within the Jewish community often try to construct a tent that's large enough to house everybody. This can give rise to a serious problem: if the institution wants to continue to be a place where everybody feels at home, it may be forced to adopt educational goals that are so vague and general as to offer little positive sense of direction. If, on the other hand, the institution decides to

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develop more concrete substantive goals that offer more guidance to the enterprise, the result may be to marginalize and possibly exclude individuals who don't fall within the framework of these goals. Particularly in smaller communities, where there are few educational option for families, there may be a reluctance to define the educational enterprise in terms of goals that will make some people feel excluded in this way.

2. <u>Turf-issues.</u> A question arose concerning a situation in which more than one institution had a stake in being the address for the attainment of a particular goal, For example, in a given community,local congregations, a JCC and College of Jewish Studies might both have a desire to engage the adult population in serious study. While it was noted that this kind of competition is not necessarily a bad thing, it was also clear that it could be, and that this might be an arena in which communal planning, guided by a larger vision of what the community should be working towards, could prove invaluable.

VISION-DRIVEN INSTITUTIONS: GIVE ME A FOR INSTANCE

This session began with a final point concerning the place of goals in Jewish education: namely, that sometimes it is not obvious why the achievement of a particular goal is desirable. The point was made in this connection that educational goals are not self-justifying, that they are to be justified by showing how they contribute to a form of Jewish existence that is intrinsically worthwhile. That is, if one can show that and how the achievement of a particular goal is essential to living a kind of Jewish life that is already recognized to richly meaningful, then the importance of achieving the goal is self-evident.

This is one of the meanings of the phrase that goals must be anchored in vision. One's vision of a meaningful Jewish existence becomes a source for identifying important educational goals -- namely, those the achievement of which are written into the vision. Beyond this, the vision functions to interpret the goal. The example of Hebrew proficiency was given: a number of people might agree that Hebrew proficiency is important, but depending on the vision of Jewish existence that guided their endorsement of hebrew proficiency, they might understand Hebrew proficiency and its contribution to life very differently. A secular-Zionist and the head of a Haredi Yeshiva might both think Hebrew proficiency, but because of underlying differences in their visions of the way we should live as Jews, they would understand the nature of Hebrew proficiency, the contexts in which it is to used, its purposes, and the attitudes to accompany the use of hebrew in very different ways. In such cases, vision does more than to say <u>that</u> Hebrew proficiency is important; it also explains why it's important and even what it means. (Later a similar point was made in relation to the ideal or goal of "life-long learning": the teachers in the Haredi Yeshiva described by Heilman and a teacher in the Dewey School might both espouse a passionate commitment to life-long learning. But this commitment grows out of radically different visions of how life should be lived, of why life-long-learning is important, of what kind of learning is worthwhile learning, and of what kinds of skills and attitudes are necessary for it. It is only in relation to the underlying vision of a meaningful existence that "life-long learning" acquires its meaning, its justification, and its educational implications.

The suggestion that goals need to be justified in a vision of a meaningful Jewish existence

raised questions about how we are to understand the concept of "meaningfulness". The comment was made that to speak of a Jewish existence is meaningful is to say that the person (whose existence it is) finds it personally meaningful (on one or more levels). As noted earlier, if our contemporaries do not find living Jewishly personally meaningful, they may go elsewhere. Though this point was not challenged, the point was made that to speak of Jewish existence as "meaningful" may -- and perhaps should - also mean something else: namely, that it is a worthy form of Jewish existence.

THE DEWEY SCHOOL AS A VISION-DRIVEN INSTITUTION

A simulation of a short episode in the kitchen of the Dewey school provided the background for looking at Dewey's vision of a meaningful human existence and the way it was embodied in the life of his school. In the simulation, the teacher and the 6th graders struggled with two problems: the cake that didn't rise and the child whose kashrut would stand in the way of his eating the hamburgers that had been put on the menu.

After the simulation, key elements of Dewey's vision were discussed: his commitment to the method of science as the method of everyday life; his belief that life at its best is a process in which we are constantly learning and growing from the experiences that we have; and his beliefs concerning the importance of encouraging individuality and personal growth but in such a way that the individual continues to contribute to the well-being of the community. The ideal community is one in which each is engaged in work that is a source of personal growth and that contributes in a perceptible way to the welfare of the community.

After clarifying elements of the vision, we examined the ways in which this vision was implicit in the episode we looked at; for the claim was made that in a vision-driven institution, you'd find evidence of the vision in any snapshot or cross-section you looked at. In the context of this discussion, questions arose concerning a) the adequacy of the simulation as an example of what Dewey would have done; b) whether Dewey's ideas are appropriate to the arena of Jewish education; c) questions concerning Dewey's vision -- for example, does it have room in it for an individual who wants to go his/her way in independence of the group?

This part of the session concluded with a summary of some key features of vision-driven institutions:

1. there is a clear, shared, and compelling vision of the kind of individual and community toward which one believes one should educate.

2. Anchored in this vision are clear educational goals which guide the enterprise.

3. Curriculum, pedagogy, physical organization, social organization, ethos all in various ways reflect the goals and the vision that the institution is committed to. The vision suffuses the life of the institution.

4. The educators are whole-heartedly identified with the vision and goals the institution represents; they embody it in their own lives and it guides their efforts at education.

5. Because the vision is genuinely compelling to the key stakeholders, because they genuinely care about its actualization, gaps between the vision and actual outcomes are deeply troubling and serious efforts are made to close these gaps.

Another feature of such institutions, noted as a follow-up to this list by one member of our group, is that such institutions have a profound sense of mission; they believe that they are necessary to achieve some important state-of-affairs which, in their absence, would not be accomplished.

In response to point #5, the point was made that the gap between vision and outcome can be closed in more than one way: one of them to transform our educational practices so as to achieve the vision; another is to revise the vision in such a way that the gap disappears. This matter is discussed by Senge, who claims that, faced with a gap between aspiration and attainment, we are often too quick to lower our aspirations rather than to tackle the difficult but challenging question of what we might do to actually achieve our aspirations.

Another issue that was raised was the following: can a vision-driven institution be successful in its efforts when it is not surrounded by a familial or general culture that is at one with its at one with its outlook? That is, what other the social conditions under which such an institution is likely to have a profound impact?

At the conclusion of the Dewey discussion, the point was made that although Dewey himself works from vision to educational design, this is not the only route for an institution interested in becoming more adequately organized around compelling goals. While an institution's efforts at self-improvement might begin with a systematic effort to articulate its vision, its efforts might begin at another level -- say, with an effort to figure out what it's really after in its history, or Bible, or Hebrew curriculum. Taken seriously and pursued, such questions might only illuminate practice but carry one "upwards" to reflection concerning questions of basic goals and vision.

THE EXAMPLE OF EARLY SECULAR-ZIONISM

The Deweyan example of vision-drivenness was followed by a discussion of the role that vision played in guiding early secular-Zionist debates concerning education. Daniel Marom suggested that Palestine was a kind of "lead community" for secular-Zionist ideology, the arena in which its leading ideas were to be tested out and embedded. It was clear to the leaders of the Yishuv that education would need to play a critical role in this process, and they set about systematically trying to embed the tenets of their vision in early educational istitutions. These tenets included:

1. Hebrew as a living language, integral to being a nation.

2. Integration of Jewish and general aspects of existence.

3. The Land of Israel, with emphasis on the role of the Jewish People as producers (rather than middlemen)

4. Incorporation of Jewish tradition into national consciousness.

The power of this example lies in the fact that efforts of the visionaries who were dedicating to embedding their vision in the Yishuv were successful! An example, Eliezer Ben Yehudah's passionate commitment to the Hebrew language, his insistence on speaking it at all times in a period when nobody else used it as an everyday tongue, eventuated in the development and spread of the language.

An examination of the debates surrounding, say, the attempt to turn to Tu Bi"Shvat into a tree-planting festival clearly revealed the extent to which the Teacher's Union that struggled with this matter were guided their vision of what a secular-Zionist community needs to be and how education can contribute to this effort.

This being an example of the successful effort to transform a vision into a shared social reality, the question was raised: what happens after the vision is realized? Once it's fully embedded in the life of the community -- in the way, say, that Hebrew or the celebration of Tu B'Shevat now are in Israel - does the vision become routinized? Does it lose its power? In response, it was suggested that though this may sometimes happen, sometimes ways are found to pour new meaning into the vision, or into the customs associated with it. An example of this was linking Tu B'Shevat in the USA to issues of ecology that were on the minds of Americans.

The session concluded with a discussion of the fact that the two themes that are central to Dewey -- life-long learning and the integration of individual and community -- are also central within Judaism, there being a variety of textually grounded interpretations of these notions. It was agreed that in our efforts to think about the kinds of visions that guide Jewish education, such interpretations need to be considered. One such interpretation will be found in Professor Greenberg's vision of an educated Jew.

CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

The end of the day included the first opportunity for the Community-based work groups to meet together to discuss ideas put on the table and to begin thinking about the development of a community plan designed to encourage local institutions to wrestle with increasing seriousness concerning issues of goals. There was also, after dinner, a chance for small groups to gather to discuss the portraits-exercise.

In addition, over dinner, Shmuel Wygoda offered an orientation to our upcoming visit to Yeshivat Har Etzion. His discussion began with an articulation of the vision that guided traditional Lithuanian Yeshivot and the ways in which that vision has been expanded by the Hesder movement in Israel. The ideal of Torah Li'Shmah, of Torah as a guide to life, and of the Talmid Chacham remains intact, but it is accompanied by a vision of the ideal Jew as one who is also deeply committed to securing the welfare of Israel as a political and social community. While the rabbis who head Yeshivat Har Etzion are in their own lives "on the Left", they don't urge this on their students; what they do urge is that they take seriously the political, social and military issues that the country faces

and do their share to address them. In various ways that Shmuel articulated, institution reflects this complex vision that he described.

CIJE GOALS SEMINAR -- PROCEEDINGS FOR DAY 2

DVAR TORAH

The morning began with Bob Hirt's Dvar Torah. Using an interpretation of the story of Cain as a springboard, he articulated a classical Jewish position concerning the parental responsibility to educate one's children. To assume that one's child is already an 'Ish", a fully developed person (as did Cain's parents), and thus to abdicate the responsibility to educate is to ask for serious trouble. Cain belatedly understood how he himself had suffered from this abdication; in the spirit of tshuvah he took his own responsibilities as an educator very seriously, as evidenced by his naming his son "Chanoch" -- "the educated one." The Dvar Torah concluded with a very moving image of Jewish learning drawn from the writings of the late Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik. In the piece we looked at Rabbi S. is engaged in learning with a group of students -- in the presence of figures like the Rambam, who add their voices to the conversation. The students discuss and argue not just with the Rabbi but also with these giants of Jewish thought who show up as partners to a conversation that spans the generations.

REVIEW OF DAY 1 PROCEEDINGS

The review of Day 1's proceedings brought forth a number of observations. The statement that Rabbi Lichtenstein was "on the Left" was corrected with the suggestion that what needed to be said is that the leaders of the Har Etzion Yeshiva are "identified in their own lives with the political center and the Left."

It was observed that the proceedings did not adequately emphasize that one of the serious obstacles to the development and implementation of educational goals is that there is often a substantial dissonance between the outlooks of professionals and the student-population.

We also returned to issues concerning pluralism and inclusivity that had not been adequately summarized in the proceedings. Here are some points that were made:

1. One of the points that was reiterated in this context is that sometimes in the effort to include everyone, there is a tendency to bow to the requirements of the most observant, of skewing things in their favor.

2. In the beginnings of an educational institution, it may be easier to discuss goals and vision in a serious way -- to articulate what you are and are not strongly committed to -- than later on; but even then, there are counter-pressures, e.g. the need to generate a clientele.

3. The push towards inclusivity may derive from financial necessity (in institutions struggling for membership), or from a desire not to "leave someone out in the cold," or from a commitment to an ideal of pluralism. But the push towards inclusivity may bring a number of problems that were articulated: a) sometimes the most powerful faction ends up dictating the terms of the institution's life; b) sometimes, in the name of creating consensus the institution develops a very watered-down, pareve agenda -- for example, the institution that gave up all tfillah because of an inability to find a form of prayer that would be satisfactory all around; c) sometimes the search for a vision that will satisfy everyone leads to an effort to achieve a consensus of different views, without any serious effort to engage in the kind of serious study in which an adequate vision could be grounded.

4. It was suggested in this connection - really reiterated from the day before - that mature and wise institution is one that realizes that the price of trying to satisfy everyone is too high, that, even at the price of excluding some, it must take a stand concerning what is and is not important to it. As suggested above, this may be easier to do in some stages of an institution's life than in others.

In general, the issue of inclusivity and pluralism --of the possibility of reconciling inclusivity with a vision that is substantively rich and compelling enough to guide but not marginalize the constituent groups - was addressed in this discussion. It remains in need of further discussion.

VISIT TO YESHIVAT HAR ETZION

This visit offered an opportunity to see a living example of a vision-driven institution. Therefore, both parts of the experience -- the chance to look around and the chance to hear about the underlying vision -- were critical. The summary of what we saw when we looked around is selective; it focuses on those features (some, certainly not all) of the settings we visited that seemed to aptly reflect the vision. Only in some cases do the proceedings explicitly make these connections; if in the other cases, the connections are unclear, this should be discussed.

Looking around. In the Bet Midrash, we saw young and not so young men, including Rabbi Lichtenstein, engaged in study. Some studied alone, others in pairs. There was a lot of noise, some movement. The sun shining through the windows created an airy atmosphere; looking through the windows, one could see the beautiful hills in the distance. The room was filled with chairs that were tied to the floor; but they swiveled in such a way that one could face the table in front of one or turn towards one's study partner with ease.

In the library, we were told, the books cover a much greater range than is typically associated with a Yeshiva -- books that go beyond the world of Talmud and Halacha. In the library many of the cabinets are dedicated to students who had served as soldiers and been killed. To honor their memory, their names and their pictures were found on these cabinets.

In the Pedagogic Center upstairs, we discovered an even broader array of books -- including books written by non-traditional Jews and gentiles. These books, which might include general history, philosophy, and literature, were sometimes read by the students when, after a long day's study, they wanted "a break." The Pedagogic Center was regarded as the critical site in the movement from vision to educational practice, and there were many books devoted to the work of the educator.

THE MEETING WITH RABBI LICHTENSTEIN

Some of us saw Rabbi Lichtenstein in three settings in the short time we were there: studying alone in the Bet Midrash, teaching a class to a group of some 60 students, and meeting with us to discuss the institution's vision. In his presentation, Rabbi L. began by speaking of the gap between "what we are and what we would like to be". Though there is significant resemblance between actuality and ideal, there is inevitably a gap -- a gap which energizes the institution towards improvement.

Rabbi L. characterized the Yeshiva by explaining what yeshivas, in general, are like; what Hesder is; and what the unique features of this institution are. In speaking of the features of yeshivot in general, he began by stressing their non-professional character -- the fact that those studying there are doing so not to secure professional advancement, but for very different reasons. The engagement in study is a response to a Mitzvah -- the commandment that we exercise our intellectual powers in the world of Revelation. The goal of the Yeshiva is to prepared its students for a full and proper engagement in such a life.

The focus of study is the "Oral Tradition", not the Written Law. In the Oral Law much more than in the Written Law, there is an emphasis on normativity. The focus is on our religious life as commanded beings.

In the Yeshiva, the atmosphere and the modes of study all testify to the existential significance of what is going on. Study is grounded in the belief concerning the divine character of the text that is being examined. In this sense, though the activity is heavily intellectual, it is not merely intellectual; it is an act rich with spiritual, religious meaning and provides the student with spiritual uplift. The inviolate sanctity of the text also explains the loud arguing that goes on and the careful attention to detail: for if the text really is an expression of God's law, it is of the utmost importance that we do everything we can to clarify its meaning.

In speaking of Hesder Yeshivot, Rabbi L. emphasized their emphasis on "Torat Chesed" -- on Torah that is accompanied by the desire to do good, to engage in acts of mercy and kindness. Interpreted within the framework of Hesder Yeshivot, this means a commitment to study and live with an eye towards contributing in positive ways to interpersonal situations as well as to the life of the nation. Torat Chesed is associated with study informed by a desire to teach; but it is also associated with the desire to participate in Israel's overall defense effort and to respond in other ways to national and communal needs. Such activity is not separate from, but an expression of, one's spiritual life and groundedness in Torah.

Yeshivat Har Etzion, as distinct from other Hesder Yeshivot, reflects a much broader range of ideas and books -- a much greater openness to the larger secular culture. Many of the faculty are university educated, and Rabbi L. himself frequently alludes to the likes of Milton, Ben Johnson, Burke, etc. Rabbi L. said quite explicitly that he felt that there were important things one could learn from such figures. While this bespeaks a kind of openness, he acknowledged that to outsiders the Yeshiva might still seem somewhat monastic. The general message: to the extent that the students are solidly grounded in Torah, reaching out to the general culture may be ok and even desirable. (One of the questions raised by one of our group concerned whether the ideology and the practices of the institution in areas relating to "outside learning" were sufficiently developed.)

In discussing the Rav's role as an authority, Rabbi L. was asked how his political views did or did not enter into his teaching and guidance. He indicated that most students in the yeshiva do not share his views; nor does he seek to impose them. Still, an important kind of political education does go on at Yeshivat Har Etzion. Students are encouraged to appreciate the importance of understanding and participating in the political life of their time and responding in a thoughtful and active way to the issues and needs of their time. The same kind of thoughtfulness that enters into study should go into the investigation of the country's political issues. In addition, the yeshiva emphasizes respect for other views.

The Rav was asked whether the institution's vision was transmitted to new faculty by formal orientations or through the kind of osmosis that takes place when one is participates in the life of the institution. His answer: most of the faculty are themselves graduates of the institution and hence already share its outlook. Great care is taken in deciding who to allow in as faculty -- with greater emphasis put on their spiritual outlook than on their approach to teaching.

ELUL

In listening to Ruth and to Moti, we got a picture of a very different kind of vision-driven institution. Ruth, who describes herself as a secular woman, expresses her strong unhappiness that there is no room for her at an institution like Yeshivat Har Etzion. Elul is

a place where anyone - Orthodox or secular - can come to study as an equal with others. Below are summarized some of the central tenets of its vision and the practices associated with them. As you look at them, you may want to think about the very different ways each of the items mentioned would be addressed at Yeshivat Har Etzion.

Range of students. The students include males and females, Orthodox and non-Orthodox. Everyone who wants to study is welcome. The school is, say Ruth, a bus; everyone is welcome to come on aboard, sit down, and participate on the journey. The presence of cribs for babies highlights the institution's commitment to make it possible for everyone to participate.

Range of texts studied. The texts studied include classical Jewish texts like the Bible and the Talmud but also works in modern Jewish philosophy and modern Hebrew literature and poetry. What is actually studied from year-to-year is determined through a democratic process in which all members can participate. Topics are proposed, and subjects are determined through election.

What is "learning" in Elul? Learning Elul is done without the guidance of a rabbi and without frontal teaching. There is a lot of learning in Chevruta, which is followed-up by group discussions. Study tends to be inter-disciplinary. A subject is chosen and a variety of texts that might illuminate it are then selected from out of a variety of disciplines that might include Tanach, Talmud, philosophy, literature, and the like. In the eyes of members, their study is enriched by the different voices that participate in the dialogue, male and female, orthodox and secular. Participants are encouraged to bring their very different sensibilities and concerns to the discussions that bring them together. There is a lot of disagreement, a lot of argument together, but also a lot of closeness among the participants.

Study, not prayer. Rabbi Lichtenstein has stressed that there is no separation between prayer and study, that they are really one with one another; hence, the Bet Midrash which serves as the setting for both. In Elul, the opposite is true. As Moti put it: "I can't study with the people I pray with; and I can't pray with the people I study with.

AFTERNOON PROCESSING SESSION

Here are some of the observations that were made:

1. To some people, the role of a powerful individual -- of "a zealot" - seemed to be critical in helping to establish an institution. Such a person is willing to say what he/she is genuinely for and not for -- even at the price of losing potential members.

2. Someone commented that it may be easier for a visionary person to establish a new institution than it is for a long-established institution to work towards a meaningful

consensus concerning vision.

3. It was suggested that if existing institutions <u>do</u> want to work towards any kind of shared vision, a good place to begin is by giving the rank-and-file members the chance to discuss their own journeys and visions in a kind of narrative form. Feeling heard is a good start in the process.

4. The question of "community-visions" came up again, and the suggestion was made that a community-vision could include:

      a. encouragement to local institutions to develop their own visions, including and especially efforts to engage them in serious discussions concerning questions of vision and goals;

      b. an effort to discover in what local institutions come up with certain common themes (the Israel experience, Tzedaka, Text Study) that might be meaningfully woven together and turned into a community-vision.

This discussion moved towards the articulation of convictions and concerns relating to the ways in which a vision-driven institution might come into being (e.g. starting from scratch or finding a way to work towards shared vision in an existing institution). Acknowledging the importance of such issues and noting that they are on the agenda for later in the seminar, Alan closed the session by taking note of the fact that the intent of this session was to provide a powerful living example of a vision-driven institution. Running through the formal features of a vision-driven institution articulated the day before by Daniel P., he suggested that the two institutions we had looked at each satisfied each of these criteria.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EDUCATED JEW PROJECT

In Seymour Fox's introductory comments, he discussed 5 critical elements that define the different dimensions of the Educate Jew Project -- elements that range from philosophy of education, to curriculum, to implementation, to evaluation. He indicated that while the Educated Jew Project began its efforts with attempts to articulate visions of an educated Jew and to examine their educational implications, the effort to move towards more goals-sensitive education could begin at any of the levels he described.

Seymour described the range of individuals who have written for the project and described the ways in which the conversations they have had with educators have forced both the educators and the writers to address difficult questions concerning the meaning of the

conception and the feasibility of implementation.

Each vision, Seymour urged, suggests very different educational implications, including a different conception of the ideal teacher and teacher education and a different set of emphases for educational policy. He emphasized in this connection the role that having a compelling conception of an educated Jew can play in helping educators select from among competing goals (and thus avoid the deadly temptation to try to do a little of everything.)

The session also included some comments concerning the importance of evaluation. Reference was made to Ralph Tyler's claim that we usually evaluate too late in the game -- long after it will do us any good.

At the end of this session, we broke into two sub-groups charged with working towards a better understanding of Greenberg and developing questions for him.

QUESTIONS GRAVITATING TO THE TABLE

In the course of the last couple of days, we've done a lot of talking concerning a number of issues. As we have done so, a number of questions seem to be surfacing for at least some members of our seminar, questions that we may need to be adding to and paying attention to before the seminar is done. Here is a list of some of these questions, some of which have not yet reached the table in any formal way:

1. Is it really necessary to spend so much time looking at visions? Would we lose anything if we only looked at vision-driven institutions and didn't then go on to focus our energies on images of an educated Jew?

2. Exactly what are the five levels Seymour referred to in his presentation, and what did he mean when he said that efforts to become more goals-sensitive and vision-driven could begin at any one of them? Could he offer examples? What might this mean concretely for a community interested in encouraging its institutions to become more goals-sensitive or vision-driven?

3. We have seen examples of vision-driven institutions begun by charismatic visionaries. We have yet to see examples of existing institutions that have become more vision-driven, especially institutions that feature the kinds of diversity and apathy we are familiar with. What might this process look like?

4. Is it possible to have meaningful communal goals or a meaningful communal vision? What might they look like? How might they function? How might they arise?

5. What role will CIJE be playing beyond the seminar in our efforts to encourage and guide the efforts of local institutions?

6. What role, if any, could the portrait-exercise play in institutional efforts to become more vision-driven? Are there reasons to encourage and/or to be wary of relying on this activity?

If there are other questions you think are worth raising now that we are almost half way through the seminar, this might be a good time to articulate them so that - over the next 3 days - we can find ways of addressing them,

CIJE GOALS SEMINAR, DAY 3 PROCEEDINGS

DVAR TORAH

In keeping with the seminar's interest in vision, Rob Toren's Dvar Torah built on some comments from the Talmud Bavli to point to the power that a vision may have. In this passage, Rabbi Yishmael b. Elisha suggests that it is the vision of a life guided by Torah and Mitzvot that ultimately justifies our continued existence; stripped of the opportunity to be guided by these, {we decreed upon ourselves not to marry and have chidden. That is, Rabbi Yishmael suggests that so fundamental is the vision that life itself is not worthwhile if we cannot live according to it.

REVIEW OF DAY 2 PROCEEDINGS

Pointing to a passage in which it was said that in the desire to be inclusive, sometimes basic things like Tfillah are gotten rid of, it was suggested that if the issue of tfillah does in fact divide people in an educating institution, perhaps it is not so bad to remove it from the communal agenda-- particularly if, through so doing, the various participants who walk through the door are able to fulfill the higher Mitzvah of study. Others disagreed with this view, suggesting that the tfillah-example ably exemplified the dilution of substantive in the name of inclusivity.

It was also suggested that the term "zealot", which had been used to describe those passionate visionaries who seem to play such an important role in the development of many vision- driven institutions, carries a negative connotation and should probably abandoned in favor of more neutral language like "passionate visionary." This prompted a number of comments:

a. some disagreement. It was suggested by the person who had made the original comment concerning "zealots" that the kinds of people whom he was thinking of have something that goes beyond being passionate visionaries.

b. In a very different vein, one participant suggested that we shouldn't forget that sometimes, under the right circumstances, very ordinary people do very great things. More specifically, there are times when people who may in fact be quite ordinary may play the pivot role in organizing a group's understanding of and efforts towards a vision. (Here a comparison was draw to Schindler in the movie SCHINDLER'S LIST.)

c. The comment was made that the proceedings did not adequately capture Ruth Calderon's sense of passion, as well as her narrative. It would, this person indicated, have been important to highlight her inability to be fulfilled in traditional settings and the way in which this inability led her in the direction of founding Elul.

It was noted that although an institution may begin to lose membership if its desire for inclusivity leads it to dilute everything too much, there is sometimes an opposite phenomenon. That is, there are times when trying to build too much substance and too many expectations into an institution may operate to drive people away.

ISSUES IN NEED OF BEING PLACED ON THE TABLE

Day 2's Proceedings ended with an articulation of a number of questions and issues concerning the seminar that seemed to have been surfacing for some of the participants. Participants were asked to review these questions and then to put whatever concerns they may have on the table. Here is what came out:

1. One person suggested that we ought not to limit the concept of vision to the ideal product of a Jewish education. On the one hand, we should be thinking of our vision for, say, 7 year-olds; on the other hand, adults are not finished products. Having moved in the direction of actualizing one vision, there will be new ones on the horizon.

2. A number of folks felt that question #3, which focuses on reform in already-established institutions, definitely needed attention.

3. The view was expressed that we need to understand the difference between developing and receiving a vision. In the one case, the vision is offered by leadership and then, if the leadership is successful, the vision will be received; in the other case, the emphasis is on growing a vision.

4. How does the Greenberg piece relate to the CIJE enterprise?

5. What is the vision that guides the Educated Jew Project -- and what's the role of the seminar participants in this vision? What are we supposed to be buying into?

6. How do visions arise? What does the process look like? Who should be part of it? How could such things be decided? Is there a model, or a good example, of how a vision is arrived at in an already-established institution?

7. Are we looking to arrive at a community vision which will then guide local efforts -- or should we be encouraging local visions which will eventually give rise to a community-vision?? That is, do community visions arise deductively or inductively?

8. The point was made that as important as it may be to get ideas down on paper in the effort to formulate a vision, it must be kept in mind that "it's just words" until the ideas on paper are interpreted more and more concretely. This led to the thought that we may need to focus on the role of the community as a living interpreting body.

9. It is an error to convey to local institutions that they know and have nothing in the domain we are interested in. It is critical to look at their efforts, listen to them as part of the effort to work with institutions in local communities?

10 Does CIJE have all the expertise it may need to work with institutions struggling to become more vision-driven.

11. Another participant reported on effective schools research that suggests the critical role of the principal in galvanizing energy and direction.

In light of such questions and the one reflected in the proceedings, participants were asked to identify two or three central themes in the comments that had been made -- themes on which we could concentrate in the last part of the seminar. The two themes that stood out were: a) community-vision, and b) the question of encouraging progress in already-established institutions of the kind we are familiar with back home. The latter effort was described as "developing vision and goals in messy situations!" It was agreed that these two issues would need to occupy a prominent part of our agenda in the last two days of the seminar. Staff of the seminar agreed to look for useful ways to address them in the light of the developing discussion.

TRANSLATING GREENBERG

If the development of a clear, coherent, and compelling vision is an important achievement, so is the translate of that vision into educationally meaningful terms. This session was devoted to the subject of translation, with Greenberg to be used as an illustration. A byproduct of such a discussion might also be a better understanding of Greenberg's outlook prior to meeting with him.

Because the Camp Ramah movement was guided by an ideal that is close to Greenberg,In his discussion of translation, Seymour Fox used the development of Camp Ramah to illustrate a number of the critical points.   He stressed and developed a number of themes, including the following:

a. that Greenberg's vision could not be adequately realized in a school, that an enclave was necessary that included and integrated both formal and informal dimensions. The informal domain was critical if there was to be an arena in which to live out, interpret, and apply the general principles learned in one's formal studies; moreover, those things that happened in the informal domain -- say, on the baseball field -- would become material for what happened in the classroom setting. It would be in the informal domain - on the ball field - that educators would have the chance to see whether the learnings had actually been meaningfully internalized. The idea of an enclave suggested in this discussion, and found in the Ramah idea, is an educational sub-culture that is much more than a traditional school, on the one hand, or a youth group, on the other. [Just as in the Dewey School the shop teacher, like everyone else involved, could explain what he/she was doing in terms of the larger Deweyan vision, so too in the Greenberg-enclave, or in the Ramah Camp, everyone, down to the swimming or baseball coach, understands his/her work in Jewish terms.

b. The space and time provided by the enclave-setting provides the student, whose development as a spiritual being is of the essence, with a space and time needed to develop. In contrast, the pressure towards achievement found in the traditional school may make such development an impossibility. Implicit here is the suggestion that the adoption of spirituality as an educational aim, if taken seriously, also represents a

decision not to make "achievement" (getting as many students into Harvard as possible) the aim of one's efforts. The systematic effort to pursue the one aim may well preclude the systematic effort to pursue the other.

c. For both Ramah and for Greenberg, the initiation of students into the activity of studying Jewish texts is at the heart of education. Seymour's discussion of the Ramah Camp's approach to reading texts highlighted the complex set of skills that enter into that activity and the correspondingly complex set of educational principles that guided the Ramah effort to enable students to study texts meaningfully. His discussion of the effort to develop these skills in the appropriate sequence in more than one subject-area year-by-year highlights some of the complexity involved in a systematic effort to translate a vision into practice.

At various points in the course of Seymour's discussion, questions and concerns was voiced. In one case, a comment was made suggesting that the kind of integration of formal and informal that Seymour was recommending was already, in at least a few schools, a reality.

In another case the question was raised whether the Greenberg ideal was at all applicable outside a Day School setting - say, for high school aged children attending a supplemental school. In the words of one participants, our major problem is this latter population -- that is, that great majority of students that attend supplemental schools. Seymour's response was to note that wile the education of those not attending Day Schools represents a critical challenge, so, too, is the education of children attending Day Schools. For here, too, education often fails to be clear about and to systematically work to achieve its major purposes. Hence there is good reason to take time to do what this session is concerned with: namely, to look at the way the Greenberg ideal would play out in a Day School setting.

Nonetheless, the question concerning the high school aged student who found text study for the birds continued to occupy some attention. One thought expressed was that the key to solving this kind of a problem is to begin at a very early age to initiate the child into appropriate skills and attitudes. Another thought expressed was that educational institutions, supplemental or otherwise, rarely reflect systematically on the question: If we're really committed to encouraging serious text-study (as we understand it) what kinds of preparatory experiences, pedagogy, settings, etc. have a chance of being successful with the category of individual we're thinking of. Perhaps a careful effort of this kind, one that perhaps learns from success-stories we're familiar with, would give rise to educational efforts that are much more successful than wee might think possible.

(Greenberg himself, when asked about the possibility of cultivating his vision in a supplemental school setting of the kind most American Jewish children participate in, expressed some skepticism concerning the possibility of success. By implication, his own instinct would probably be to encourage increasing numbers of children into Day School settings.

Some people felt that Greenberg was unduly pessimistic concerning the possibility of success in the supplemental setting; a single success, it was suggested, in catalyzing

a powerful spiritual encounter with the text might itself have a revolutionary impact on the student -- and one should not give up on the possibility of catalyzing such an experience in the supplemental school setting.)

In the course of the discussion, one of the participants noted that if the teacher himself/herself quietly but perceptibly embodies the profound relationship to the text that Greenberg stresses, this might powerfully affect his/her effectiveness with students in the classroom setting. The point underscored the importance of personnel and suggested an important guiding principle both in selection and education of educators.

Though the preceding point was not exactly about charisma, it gave rise to some discussion of charisma. In contradistinction to some of the comments made at the seminar concerning the importance of this trait (whatever it actually is), one of the comments made at this stage was that in some instances emphasis on the role that charismatic leadership plays may serve to discourage educators who don't think of themselves and their colleagues as particularly charismatic. The point was illustrated by Walter Ackerman in his comments concerning showing the movie STAND AND DELIVER to a group of educators working with a reform project in an Israeli development town. Though the movie was supposed to inspire them, in fact it filled them with a sense of inadequacy.

Towards the end of this session a question arose concerning the feasibility of Greenberg's Hebrew requirements in the American setting. Related to this, could you, in the absence of Hebrew, still do something very meaningful that would get at much that Greenberg was after? (As explained by Greenberg later on, his own feeling is that reading the text in the original really is the ideal -- for the same reason that one loses a lot if one tries to read Huckleberry Finn in Hebrew. But while he would not in any way compromise his sense of what's really ideal, he by no means implied that this is an "all or nothing" matter and suggested that in the absence of Hebrew something meaningful could nonetheless be accomplished.)

In response to a question raised concerning the place of Greenberg in the Educated Jew Project in relation to CIJE, Seymour stressed there was no intention at all that anybody would accept Greenberg's vision or that of any other paper represented in the Educated Jew project. Rather, the intent is to catalyze serious thinking concerning what one should be educating towards through the struggle with these visions. To come away thinking Greenberg is dead-wrong may be extremely valuable, if accompanied by an effort to understand what's inadequate about his view and what a more adequate view would look like.

THE SESSION WITH MOSHE GREENBERG

The session began with the articulation of a number of questions that were on people's minds, questions which Professor G. then responded to in sequence of his choosing.

Greenberg stressed that Jewish texts offer us answers to basic questions concerning the meaning of our existence. This does not mean that literature from outside the Jewish domain is irrelevant: on the contrary, disciplines like mathematics are common to a wide variety of traditions; as for the (non-Jewish) humanities, they can be invaluable in offering contrast and comparison with

Jewish views and thus can make us much more aware of the nature and significance of our beliefs. In this respect, the Diaspora, where Jews are constantly being asked to see the world through non-Jewish eyes, may have an advantage over Israelis. To see the world in this way, to step out of one's tradition temporarily and to see it critically from the outside, has historically served Judaism well, preventing fossilization.

A number of Greenberg's comments focused on issues concerning feminism and women. While Greenberg is doubtful that feminist scholarship has done much in the way of producing significant exegetical insights concerning the original meaning of the Biblical text, this scholarship has served to sensitize many, including Greenberg, to the way a woman who has not been specially prepared to encounter the text might experience the Bible. Greenberg illustrated these observations with the story of Jephtha, as understood by him, by the Midrash, and by some recent feminist scholarship. Greenberg also spoke extensively concerning the basis for his view that many Halachic rules that result in differential expectations of men and women no longer apply today.

Another question he was asked about concerns the participation of students in creating Midrash. Greenberg's response was that it would not be possible to create Midrash until one had significant exposure to Midrash -- just as one could not invent new dances until one had become familiarized with dances that already exist. Not everyone agreed with Greenberg on this point, and Seymour suggested that the disagreement reflected one of the great lines of division among educators: those who feel that one cannot begin to create a personal version of a given form (Midrash, dance, song, etc.) prior to serious opportunities to understand the form in the ways that it has come down to us, and those who feel that it is possible spontaneously to create such forms without such prior immersion. How one settles this issue has significant educational implications.

BREAKOUT GROUPS

In the late afternoon, the comment was made that some people seemed eager to go significantly further with the exercise of translating the Greenberg-idea into practice, with an eye towards better understanding the process and issues associated with translation. Others seemed ready to move on to other subjects, notably "community-vision". Based on this, it was proposed that we self-select into two groups, each dealing with one of these topics. The suggestion seemed acceptable and this is what we proceeded to do.

CIJE GOALS SEMINAR, DAY 4 PROCEEDINGS

DVAR TORAH

Barbara Penzner's Dvar Torah used the story of the Exodus from Egypt as the prototype or model for the realities, the challenges, and the possibilities that need to be addressed by CIJE and the communities it is working with in their effort to encourage revolutionary change in Jewish education. Through Barabara's playful yet serious comments, the Biblical tale was shown to illuminate our current situation; similarly, our current situation offered a new perspective on the biblical tale. Whether this was the first time Moshe was described as a Federation Executive is a question for which one or more of you may have the answer.

REVIEW OF DAY 3 PROCEEDINGS

On p. 3, item 11 discussed the emphasis in effective schools research on the critical role of the educational leader, or principal. What was not adequately treated was the role that the educational leader played. Two very different kinds of views (with a variety of intermediate variants) can be found in the literature on change: one of them focuses on the principal as someone with a vision that he/she encourages others to identify with [See, for example, the work of Edgar Schein on organizational development], while the other focuses on the leader's role in stimulating a process that allows a vision to emerge from among the people who make up an institution [Senge's view is closer to the latter].

Referring to the comment on p.2, #7 concerning deductive and inductive approaches to community vision, one participant added to the preceding day's discussion by introducing Michael Fullan's view. According to Fullan, whereas we sometimes tend to think it is important to start with "the big picture," with a grand, over-arching vision, sometimes - and very fruitfully - the process begins with small projects, each guided by a compelling vision. Over a period of time, the visions guiding these small projects get drawn together and woven into a larger community vision. It was commented that it is a mistake to assume that successful small projects will automatically "spread," that is, impact what goes on in other spheres. An educational leader hoping for such spread should develop mechanisms for encouraging it.

REPORT CONCERNING THE GREENBERG-TRANSLATION EXERCISE

Barry and Gail reported concerning the work that went on in this exercise. The exercise asked participants to experiment with translating Greenberg's ideas into educational practice in a Day School and supplemental school setting: "if you were working as a planner and had decided you wanted to create a Greenbergian school, how would the Greenberg vision affect the varied details?

Barry's group focused on the supplemental school setting and explored the sub-topics of staff-issues, home/family, and curriculum. They thought about these topics in relation to the furthering of concrete goals that derive from a Greenbergian educational agenda -- for example, the development in the student of the kind of interpersonal morality Greenberg thinks desirable, or the development of the ability and desire to be seriously engaged in text-study.

In discussing this latter subject in relation to staff, it was clear to the participants that all the staffing a Greenbergian school would need "to know texts" very well; but it was added that the very idea of "knowing texts" was not self-evident; indeed, it -- and the skills it involved -- would themselves have to be interpreted in relation to Greenberg's larger conception. Once clarified, this would be provide a helpful tool in selecting staff and doing in-service training.

Gail's Day School Group focused on spirituality, and they considered the question, How would parents/family have to be involved if we are to have a chance of encouraging spirituality in these children? Believing that the family's involvement is critical if we are to succeed in this area, questions concerning the kind of family involvement that would be helpful were addressed.

When the two sub-groups returned from their activities, they discussed the question: "What difference did it make to have a vision (of the kind of person you were educating toward) as a guide to your deliberations? The answer they came up with was that while anchoring your deliberation in a vision may limit you in some ways, it also frees you to focus on a few critical goals and to pour your energy into accomplishing them well.

In the course of the translation-group's discussion, a tension was identified between what the vision seemed to dictate and what the translator may have felt or wanted "in his/her guts." This in turn resurrected the question of whether it is possible/ok selectively to use Greenberg's ideas -- that is,to make use of some and to ignore some of the others.

Reacting to the report of the translation sub-group, the comment was made that only in certain kinds of educational settings would educators have the time, ability, and desire to engage in the kind of careful effort to translate Greenberg's ideas into educational terms and then to try to implement them in a thoughtful way. Most educational settings are not made to encourage this kind of thoughtful approach to their work on the part of teachers. Engaged, by virtue of the way the educational environment had been set up, in such activities as crowd-control, they do not have the time to engage in the translation effort.

In the course of this discussion, it was noted that although the translation of his conception into educational terms is not at the heart of Greenberg's agenda, he has written a powerful essay on the role of the teacher -- with special attention to the problem of what

the teacher should do in dealing with a text in which he/she does not believe. A number of people expressed an interest in this text, and it was agreed that an effort would be made to get hold of it and to get it to interested individuals in the seminar.

COMMUNITY-WIDE VISION GROUP

Alan reported that this group viewed its task as opening up a discussion which would provide a springboard to a discussion that will follow on Thursday. Our initial question, "Is there, can there be, such a thing as a community-wide vision" soon led to a more basic question, "What do we mean by community?" After discussion, the group seemed to gravitate towards the following operating definition of community: all of those institutions that are providers of education, with Federation as convener of the process. To this it was added that the character of "the community" might grow clearer through the conversation on goals.

Alan added that the group went on to discuss a number of different ways of interpreting the notion of a "community-wide vision. While there was no closure the group settled on what some might view as a minimalist interpretation of the term. According to this interpretation, the community-vision appropriate for a community that is serious about Jewish education is that of a community which makes it possible for all local educating institutions to be vision-driven along the lines specified in the seminar (see, for example, the proceedings for Day 1). The community's role in encouraging local institutions to wrestle with issues of vision was referred to as its "envisioning role". Is such an interpretation of "community vision" all form and no process? Not necessarily: it was felt that the effort to become vision-driven in the sense specified would necessarily involve institutions in wrestling with serious content issues.

Alan' concluding comments focussed on the disappointment expressed by one member of the "community vision" group that the seminar had not yet provided significant opportunities for the different communities to hear from one another concerning the efforts they have previously undertaken to encourage a stronger goals-orientation, as well as insights and issues that had emerged through these efforts.

In response to Alan's comments, three observations were made:

1. that while we have tended to distinguish between "the community" and "institutions," in fact we need to remember that institutions are themselves communities, and that it may be very helpful to so regard them in deliberating about their needs and about how to interact with them.

2. There is considerable research concerning different ways of understanding the concept of community; and it may be that a study of some of this research

would provide us with new and perhaps very revealing ways of conceptualizing what we are doing.

3. While it may be fine to define "community" as the organized Jewish community (along the lines suggested by Alan), it needs to be remembered (if such a definition is accepted) that there are many individuals - and perhaps the majority! - who are in some sense members of the greater community who may feel no ownership in, or understanding of, decisions and programs emanating from "the community" in the narrow sense described above.

KYLA EPSTEIN'S CASE-STUDY

The morning's principal session was organized around Kyla's case-study of her congregation's efforts to develop a vision that was supposed to carry significant implications for the congregation's educational program. The session began with a request to participants that they respect the delicacy of Kyla's situation in discussing her congregation's efforts in this forum, and that, in this spirit, they treat whatever Kyla was to say about her institution as confidential.

Kyla began by describing the institution along various dimensions and went on to explain what prompted the effort to develop and then interpret a new vision, as well as the way that effort developed. She paid special attention to the composition, the work, and outcomes of the task-force that was concerned with education. Along the way she discussed the extent of her own involvement and that of other central figures (like the Rabbi), and she also identified what were for her the critical issues that the overall process raised for her. Because much of the material describing the case was handed out to you, no attempt will be made to summarize these various matters in any systematic way. Below some of the issues that were central for Kyla and that transcend the particulars of this case are summarized:

1. lay/professional roles in the process of developing and interpreting the implications of a vision for different arenas of congregational life. Who should be part of the process and at what point in the process? What kinds of roles should the participants decided on have? Who should be deciding these matters?

In the case-study, there was a great deal of ambivalence on the part of the congregation concerning the involvement of its professionals -- along with a strong reluctance (really, an inability) to address the issue frontally. The result was many mixed messages and the exclusion of the professionals from a great deal of deliberation. The upshot of this is that in the educational arena a whole lot of decisions were made concerning strategic goals without significant involvement on the part of the congregation's senior educator and the Board she works with.

2. <u>What/who is to be regarded as authoritative</u> in the process as a whole and/or at its different stages?? That is, who should have, or should be regarded as having, final authority over the process as applied to education and other domains? Possible candidates include: the president, the Text, the Rabbi, God, the educational director, the Congregation's membership, an outside consultant offering social scientific or other kinds of wisdom?

> In the case-study, the congregation had formally announced in its new vision-statement that it is a democratic institution, an institution in which everyone, except professionals, have a vote. What this implies is that the greater Judaic and educational knowledge which the senior professionals in the institution possess do not establish for these professionals any special status of authority in the overall process. On the contrary, at many points they were actively kept out of the process. Another implication of the congregation's democratic structure is that members who come to the Temple once a year carry as much weight in the process as those who are actively involved on an ongoing basis.

3. <u>What is the appropriate balance of process and content</u> in the effort to develop a vision for the congregation as a whole and for its educational program in particular? Is it important to insist that content-issues (relating to both educational and Judaic knowledge) be given prominence in the effort to arrive at a shared vision? If so, can such content be introduced in such a way that the non-expert lay participants in the effort do not feel overwhelmed and disempowered by the professionals who bring with them various kinds of expertise? Is the introduction of content and employment of content-experts consistent with a sense of real ownership on the part of the lay membership? Also, if content is deemed desirable, what kind of content would be most helpful? What kinds of expertise might be desirable?

> In the case-study described by Kyla, content and the "content-experts" (the professionals) tended not to play a significant role; the emphasis was on process. As an example, the task-force concerned with education recommended a school newspaper on the grounds of a need for "communication", but it seemed very little interested in what the newspaper would communicate, that is, in the kind of content that the educating institution should be trying to pass on.

4. <u>What are appropriate criteria for evaluating</u> the kinds of activities and programs that should have a place in the congregation as a whole and especially in its educational program? And what is the basis for deciding on these criteria?
To what extent should basic decisions be made based on whether the membership "is happy with them"?

In the case-study, "the bottom-line" seemed to be "customer-satisfaction" -- that is, the extent to which a given program or activity was found satisfying by the participants. There seemed to be no attention to, nor any acknowledged principles that would allow anyone to judge, whether the program or activity was "important" and worth doing (quite apart from whether it made people "happy"). It was suggested by one of our participants that a principal reason for this kind of approach was the institution's reliance on social scientific expertise.

5. In the process of trying to move from vision to practice, <u>what role does the vision-statement that has been arrived at play?</u> How is it utilized? Is the periodic re-visiting of the vision-statement built into the process? How can the process be structured so that, along the way, attention to means doesn't push to the side the vision-statement that is supposed to guide the overall effort?

> In the case-study, once the focus turned to strategy, attention turned away from the vision-statement, and a number of the strategies decided on were utterly disconnected from the vision-statement.

6. <u>Emotional process.</u> The effort to arrive at a vision and a strategic plan is time-consuming, stressful, exhausting, and sometimes very frustrating. How can the process be organized so as to reduce negative emotionality, and how can such emotionality be dealt with so as to stave off an overflow of frustration, or cynicism, or withdrawal?

SOME OF THE ISSUES/INSIGHTS DISCUSSED AFTER THE INITIAL PRESENTATION

1. It was striking to some individuals that organizations and institutions like the UAHC and Hebrew Union College were not encouraged to enter into this process. It was felt by those who made these comments that involving them might have led to the design of a much more effective process and to the introduction of content in a way that could have been very helpful.

2. A comment was made that the completely process-dominated approach described in the case-study stands in sharp contrast to CIJE's strong emphasis on content. The question was raised; can an approach be developed that marries content- and process-issues in an effective way?

3. A point - one that has frequently been made in CIJE-discussions - was made concerning the importance of "the Holy Trinity" in effecting significant change in institutional settings, the trinity consisting of the Rabbi, a powerful lay leader, and the educational leader. All three must be seriously engaged and working together if the process is to have a good chance of turning out well. In the case under consideration, two of the three -- the educator and the

rabbi -- were rendered relatively disenfranchised and powerless. Related to this, the point was made that a critically important role for the larger community leadership is to find a way of encouraging institutions to engage all 3 of the relevant parties in the process.

4. At various points in the seminar, the point has been made that serious discussion concerning vision and/or goals can be launched in more than one way or context. As an illustration, the point was made that the list of strategic educational goals that had been developed in the course of the process that Kyla described were in many cases extremely vague and ambiguous. But this, it was suggested, could itself be positive in that it could be used to force a serious discussion of what these vague, ambiguous statements should be taken to mean. Such a discussion could serve to raise the level of consciousness concerning goals in significant ways.

5. There was some discussion of the relationship between visions and vision-statements. The suggestion was made that having a vision-statement may or may not be evidence of having a vision. What was intended was that in order for the vision-statement to qualify as, or to represent evidence of, a vision:

   a) it would need to include (or be known to its drafters to entail) an interpretation of what is really meant by general terms it employs like "behaving ethically" or "committed to the activity of study", etc.

   b) it needs to be, as Senge puts it, not just a series of statements but "a force in people's hearts."

   In this connection, it was mentioned that it might well be possible to develop a vision-statement that is sufficiently detailed as to offer a real sense of what the institution is and is not about, without being so detailed as to leave no room for refining, reinterpreting, and re-visioning along the way. Just as it may be very important to establish a vision-statement that, by going beyond vague rhetoric, can offer real guidance, so too, it was suggested it may be important for the vision-statement to be open enough to allow acts of re-visioning along the way.

6. A question was raised, but not discussed at lengths, concerning the possible or desirable role of students in the process of developing a vision for an educating institution.

7. The suggestion was made that if the process of developing a vision and a strategic plan is not to be very counter-productive, it is very important that it be implemented in a meaningful way without too great a lag-time.

GENERAL INSIGHTS AND ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE CASE STUDY

Many of the general points that people expressed in the statements they drafted at the end o the session are represented above. An unedited copy of the statements that were drafted is available to anyone who want it -- except that names have been removed. Below is a summary of a few of the themes that seemed to me (DP) salient in your statements:

1. The lay-professional alliance is of critical importance. It needs to be nurtured in such a way that both parties feel included both in the process and in the product of their efforts. To this someone added that "in the absence of ongoing involvement, the professional needs to be able to "ride the crest" and use the process to further his/her legitimate educational goals.

2. While outside consultants may offer an institution important insights that they may be incapable of generating for themselves, they may also steer the institution in undesirable directions (as a result of the ways of thinking that they bring to their analysis and their lack of concrete familiarity with the religious tradition and the institution they are looking at.

3. "Process must never be allowed to bury or overpower the vision. "When you are up to your "tuchis" in alligators, it is hard to remember that the original purpose is to drain swamp."

4. A way must be found that marries serious attention to content to a process that empowers the stakeholders and gives rise to a sense of shared ownership.

5. The planning- or visioning process needs to be developed in such a way as to minimize the likelihood that participants will walk away or become cynical. One cannot assume that being involved in such a process is necessarily rewarding.

AFTERNOON EXERCISE

The introduction to the exercise stressed that there are many ways of facilitating/encouraging efforts towards becoming more focussed around meaningful goals and more vision-driven. The exercise prepared for the afternoon is an attempt to marry process with content. Four questions were to guide the exercise: 1. how would you imagine a process like this taking place in your situation? 2. what issues would need to be addressed? 3. How would this effort be launched? 4. What would you need to carry the process through successfully?

On this occasion, seminar-participants were divided based on job-a-like criteria. After they met in groups a de-briefing process took place. With apologies, the summary of what

went on in the de-briefing will not be included below; it will be included in the next set of proceedings (which will be mailed to you).

CIJE GOALS SEMINAR, DAY 5 PROCEEDINGS

DVAR TORAH

With Tisha B'Av only three days away, Beverly Gribetz's Dvar Torah called our attention to the 8th Mishna in Masechet Ta'Anit, which describes the customs and the joyousness associated with the 15th of Av, only 6 days after the 9th of Av, on which day our attention is focused, in a spirit of mourning and atonement, on our tragedies as a nation. Beverly suggested that the 15th of Av celebration is an antidote to the 9th of Av. Equally important the carefully chosen words of the 8th Mishnah are themselves comments on, and antidotes to, several verses in the Book of Lamentations. As against the cessation from dancing and the destruction of the young men described in the Book of Lamentations, the Mishnah describes the 15th of Av as a festival in which the young men have re-appeared, in which the daughters of Jerusalem go forth to dance in the vineyards, and in which marriage unions that will reach into the future are made with great joy. The message of the Mishna, Beverly suggested, is an affirmation, against the background of national tragedy, of Jewish continuity.

ANNETTE HOCHSTEIN ON THE MANDEL INSTITUTE FOR THE ADVANCED STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT OF JEWISH EDUCATION

Speaking on behalf of the Mandel Institute, Annette Hochstein described the Institute's work, with attention to purpose and rationale, to the way the Institute works, and to kinds of activities and initiatives the Institute launches. The Institute invents and sets up institutions for which there is a need; these institutions eventually become independent of the Institute but retain a kind of familial relationship to the Institute. Among the activities the Institute has been engaged with over the years are the following: it staffed the Mandel Commission; it developed the School for Educational Leadership; it guided CIJE in its initial phases; it organized and continues to sponsor the Educated Jew Project, and it has become the organizational home of the Jerusalem Fellows Program.

The Institute's activities are grounded in a number of convictions: 1) Great ideas in combination with great leaders are the source of change; 2) Communities are the locus of change; 3) Planning is the critical means for promoting change. Without strong leaders and careful, thoughtful planning, powerful ideas prove sterile.

As an illustration of the way in which the Institute works, Annette discussed the School for Educational Leadership, which is a response to the shortage of senior personnel in education in Israel. Annette took us through the process through which the School for Educational Leadership came into being. The upshot of this effort is that in each of the last two years there have been close to 1,000 applicants for 20 positions. The curriculum of the school testifies to the Institute's insistence on serious philosophical thinking. Its commitment to pluralism is reflected in the fact that its student body, which includes both secular and religious Jews of very different kinds, is immersed in a curriculum which requires everyone to engage both with traditional Jewish sources and study (for example, through encounters with the Talmud) and with the more general Western intellectual tradition.

REVIEW OF DAY 4 PROCEEDINGS

As a follow-up to the comments in the Proceedings concerning the role of the consultant in the process described by Kyla, the comment was made that, for better or for worse, the choice of the consultant is a critical decision, since his/her orientation will determine the language and direction of the inquiry and the nature of the findings.

Scanning the preceding day's Proceedings, one participant suggested that the distinction between process and content was not always being drawn in a consistent and/or helpful way. The main point was this: there were times in the proceedings and possibly in our discussions where the term "process" was being used to describe activities in which there was indeed a lot of content -- for example, the efforts of a group of individuals to unearth and reflect on their own and one another's beliefs and understandings concerning the nature of their Jewish commitments. The fact that in such situations the participants are not listening and reacting to outside-inputs which put new kinds of content before them does not mean that they are not seriously wrestling with content. This comments suggests

1) that we need to be more careful in the way we distinguish process from content,

2) that within the domain of content, we distinguish between content-oriented sessions in which there is an encounter with a body of ideas that flows towards the participants "from the outside" and content-oriented sessions where the emphasis is on unearthing the participants' own ideas.

It is worth stressing that while separated out here for purposes of clarification, the kinds of activities referred to in this paragraph are not, in practice, mutually exclusive. Indeed, at the heart of our seminar is the suggestion that they are all pertinent and important and that ways need to find to integrate them.

As a follow-up to a comment concerning the critical importance of engaging the Rabbi, the lay-leader, and the educational leader in the effort at educational reform, the comment was made that an important challenge for CIJE may be to work with rabbinical seminaries with an eye towards better preparing future rabbis to understand and adequately address the challenges they will face in the arena of Jewish education. It is, for example, important that they come to understand the importance of developing an enthusiastic united front in the educational domain that includes rabbi, lay-leader, and educational leader; similarly, it is important that they become more thoughtful about how to nurture a culture that supports educational reform in their institution.

CIJE, THE GOALS PROJECT, AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Alan Hoffmann's comments concerning the role of CIJE began with the suggestion that it is important to view the Goals Project in a larger CIJE context. He reminded participants that the basic mission of CIJE is not Lead Communities or the Goals Project, but systemic reform in North America. Its task is to transform the terms of reference in Jewish education in North America, principally via two strategies: 1) building the profession; 2) mobilizing community leadership.

Viewed in this context, Lead Communities are to be understood as laboratories in which to demonstrate the possibility of systemic reform. This effort needs to be recognized as long-term, difficult   and very important.   The last two years have witnessed slow progress -- but progress nonetheless. Below - and as background to our efforts in the area of goals - is Alan's skeletal summary of what has been, and will be happening.

Personnel front. The effort to diagnose strengths, weaknesses, and challenges is already well under way, via the research efforts that have been undertaken in the Lead Communities. The data that have been collected will help these communities develop Personal Action Plans that address their personnel weaknesses. The Principals Seminar that will take place at Harvard in the fall represents one way in which CIJE is working with the local communities to encourage improvement in the area of personnel in response to what we are learning.

While the knowledge generated through the study of personnel in the Lead Communities is expected to help these communities, CIJE believes that its value with go beyond these local endeavors. Its suspicion is that some of what will be learned in the Lead Communities will be generalizable, and hence of practical value, to many other communities as well.

Monitoring. evaluation. and feedback. Alongside the personnel-efforts has been the work of the Monitoring and Evaluation and Feedback team. Not only have they been integrally involved with the personnel-piece, but they have also been systematically engaged in studying the process through which the Lead Communities have been trying to mobilize their resources and energies towards the improvement of Jewish education.

Work with other communities. CIJE has been rethinking its self-imposed limitation to only three communities. It has entered into conversations with other communities concerning ways in which there might be fertile, though somewhat more limited, partnerships. The guiding principle is that at the same time as CIJE will be working with 3 systemic laboratories (in the Lead Communities), it will work with certain other communities around specific, narrowly defined issues.

Mobilization at the Continental Level. CIJE needs to be more systematic in its effort to reach an ever wider audience with the story of what it is and what can be done. It has recently hired a new, full-time person whose responsibility will include answering this challenge.

Against the background of these efforts, Alan turned his attention to those CIJE initiatives that speak to the question, "All of this - for what?" Two significant CIJE initiatives bear on this question: one of them is the "Best practices" project; the other is the Goals Project.

The Goals Project emerged out of different kinds of concerns: one of them was the conviction that to be effective, educating institutions would need to arrive at concrete interpretations of "meaningful Jewish continuity" to guide their efforts; another was the recognition that evaluation and accountability are not possible in the absence of significantly greater clarity concerning what our goals are and what success would look like.

How does CIJE see itself engaging with the communities in the Goals Project? While the particulars of the process may well vary somewhat from community to community, using the prototype of discussions under way with Milwaukee, Alan sketched out a three-stage process:

Stage 1: the communities decide whether they feel ready to engage with the Goals Project. Does the Project speak to their needs? Does it integrate satisfactorily with efforts planned and under way? etc. If the answer is yes, the community's task is to inform and recruit the key stakeholders in educating institutions to participate in the next stage of the process.

Stage 2: For those who are prepared to commit themselves to Stage 2 of the process, CIJE will sponsor a series of 3 or 4 substantial seminars designed to foster understanding and reflection concerning the basic beliefs that inform the Goals Project, to communicate what it might mean for an institution to be involved in the project, and to encourage institutions to embark, or continue, on a journey towards more substantial vision-drivenness. The precise content and structure of these seminars would be worked out by CIJE in partnership with each participating community, based on a number of factors including the situation of the participating institutions..

Stage 3: CIJE begins working with a small group of institutions from among those that have participated in Stage 1. These are institutions which, through their work at Stage 1, have developed a serious understanding of the energy and thought that will be needed to become significantly more vision-driven, believe in the importance of becoming so, and want in cooperation with CIJE and other relevant institutions to enter intensively into this process. A clear agreement concerning what is expected on the part of CIJE and on the part of participating institutions is a precondition of involvement in the Stage 3 process.

Among the Stage 3 entry requirements is the identification by each participating institution of an individual, or "coach", whose responsibility it will be to oversee and guide the institution's Stage 3 activities. Active involvement at this stage of denominational movements and the training institutions, so that their resources and talents are available to participating institutions that are working to identify and actualize their guiding visions, is highly desirable.

In relation to these educating institutions, CIJE's job would be: 1. to work with the institution to develop a plan of action that identifies both foci and strategies; 2. to train and work with the institutional coaches. Beyond this, it may prove desirable and feasible for CIJE to identify and work with a small cadre of additional coaches, with special kinds of expertise, who will serve as resources to a number of Stage 3 institutions. It is also a possibility that at the beginnings of Stage 3 it will be desirable to identify in each community that has more than one Stage-3 institutions an individual who will serve as a community-wide guide to the process.

Among the comments/questions called forth by Alan's presentation were the following:

1. The suggestion was made that the word "train" to describe CIJE's anticipated effort to cultivate the group of individuals who will work with educating institutions at Stage 3 was inappropriate. This issue was discussed for several minutes until an individual who identified herself as a layperson suggested that this might be the kind of issue which the education professionals might want to tackle on their own without the presence of laypeople.

2. Based on her experience with the C.E.C project, Isa Aron warned against the danger of going too fast and trying to do too much. The work is labor-intensive and one might do better working intensively with a few institutions than trying to work with a large number.

3. One participant commented that our week-long seminar had done something very important in bringing many different parties together in an arena where relationships as well as a sense of shared understandings and values that go beyond labels could develop. He added to this, however, that there is still a need for greater clarity and awareness on the part of participating communities and institutions concerning the kinds of resources, especially emanating from the denominational movements and institutions, that would be available to them. This person concluded by noting that it would be important to create at Stages 2 and 3 the kind of ambiance that we had jointly created in Jerusalem.

4. The suggestion was made that particularly in the context of social realities in the United States it would be very important to commission articles in the Educated Jew Project that give a prominent place to notions like feminism, egalitarianism, and pluralism which figure prominently in the outlook of many contemporary American Jews. It was suggested, in this connection, that it might be of value to invite each of the denominations to write, or make available to CIJE, an article that articulates systematically its perspective on the aims of Jewish education, with attention to their view on such issues.

TOWARDS A COMMUNITY-WIDE AGENDA - Professor Michael Rosenak's presentation.

Introduction to Mike Rosenak's presentation. Daniel Pekarsky introduced Mike Rosenak's presentation by noting that although the focus of much of our seminar had been on educating institutions, many of the participants had come as representatives of communities and were interested in what a community-wide vision might be. Drawing on some of the conversation that had gone on in a seminar sub-group that had focused on this question, Daniel painted what might be viewed as a minimalist understanding of community-vision. According to this view, an appropriate vision for a community that took Jewish education seriously is that of a community 1) that supports and encourages all educating institutions in their efforts to clarify and actualize their own guiding visions and goals; and 2) that is actively committed to upgrading personnel; 3) that galvanizes continuing community interest in and appreciation of educational issues. The question posed was the following: what, if anything, beyond these minimalist ideas might plausibly and meaningfully enter into a community-wide vision?

Mike Rosenak's presentation offered many insights concerning this and other matters. Below is an attempt to point to (without any pretense of doing justice to the richness of) some of the major ideas.

Mike Rosenak's presentation. There is a sense in which a community almost by definition features a shared vision - for what makes a group of people "a community" is the presence of shared rules, recognized authorities, a common agenda, and a vision. But while this was true of pre-modern communities, this older understanding of community no longer fits our contemporary communal reality. The Jewish community of today does not have a self-understanding defined by shared rules and a shared vision; what it does have is a desire for the Jewish People to continue. It is a desire for us to be united as a people -- but without anybody having to sacrifice any of his or her autonomy.

Under contemporary conditions two versions of what it means to be a pluralistic community suggest themselves as models for the Jewish community, each of them with a different understanding of what, amidst our differences, we do and can have in common. The first is a minimalist understanding of our existence as a community: ours is a covenant of faith; we are thrown together by the accident of common needs -- for example, those needs that spring from the presence of anti-Semitism. Beyond our efforts to address these common needs, the principle - the only principle - that we stand for and that guides our existence as a community is this one: "All forms of Jewish life are good and legitimate." Period!

Jewish diversity under modern conditions is, however, consistent with a richer and more positive understanding of what it means for us to exist as a community. It is possible for the community to incorporate significant diversity and yet to be organized around a set of shared assumptions. Different sub-groups within the community will seek to interpret and implement these assumptions in very different ways; but these assumptions establish an arena in which discussion and controversy can go on among the varied groupings.

What are these shared assumptions? What is it that we share and can educate towards in a state of controversy? Mike Rosenak listed 5 elements:

1. A sacred literature. We share a sacred literature that speaks to origins and purposes, a literature that addresses matters of ultimate concern. Though we will no doubt approach this sacred literature in very dissimilar ways, study of this literature is capable of uniting us, as can our efforts to find points of contact in our readings of this literature.

2. A common vocabulary. As different as we are from each other, we share a common vocabulary that is wonderfully rich in its associations. The multitude of words, phrases and concepts that we share -- like "Motza-ay Shabbat", "Parve", "Milchig", "Tikkun Olam" -- go a long way towards establishing, even as we are very different, a shared universe.

3. Shared practices. Even though, as Jews, we largely go our own ways, it is entirely possible for us to agree on the desirability of certain shared practices, for example, in the arena of Tzedaka or in the matter of the kinds of ritual observances that are appropriate at communal functions.

4. Problems. In the midst of our diversity, a measure of unity can be established by the determination to regard the problems faced by some Jews as problems for all Jews -- that is, by a determination on the part of all to address seriously the problems that any segment of the Jewish people face.

5. Israel. It is true that identification with Israel is no substitute for a shared agenda; at the same time, it should not be left out of an effort to identify and forge a unifying core. While Jews may interpret the significance of Israel very differently, they can come to a shared understanding that Israel is a special and important place, not just another place where Jews happen to live.

Mike Rosenak's suggestion that these various elements, taken together, establish the possibility of a fairly rich shared universe among Jews who are otherwise very different from each other, called

forth a number of questions and comments from seminar participants. His talk shed new light on questions that had emerged at various points in the seminar: questions concerning the possibility of a meaningful shared Jewish universe among contemporary Jews, as well as questions/dilemmas concerning inclusivity and exclusivity. For example, is it possible to have a Jewish community or educational institution that stands for something substantial without at the same time excluding or marginalizing some members of the community?

CONCLUDING SESSIONS

Following discussion of Mike Rosenak's presentation and a final opportunity to gather in work groups, the group gathered for a final work-session. The session began with an opportunity for participants to respond to a form that invited their feedback concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the seminar, suggestions for improvement, etc. We then moved on to hear and discuss the plans of action that were emerging from the deliberations of the Baltimore, Cleveland, and Milwaukee delegations. The three presentations situated their developing plans of action in the context of local realities and of continuing efforts of a variety of kinds. A summary of these plans will be made available to seminar participants on a separate occasion.

After the community plans-of-action had been presented and discussed, Alan Hoffmann expressed his excitement concerning what was emerging. He noted in this connection that, quite apart from any community-wide efforts, some of the participating educating institutions emerged from the seminar with a desire to work intensively in the areas addressed by the seminar. He also indicated the possibility of some fruitful coalitions among institutions represented around the table.

Following a break, the week's activities concluded with a festive dinner. At this dinner, participants were given a short booklet that included short autobiographical statements developed by the seminar participants. These autobiographies included addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, etc., and it is hoped that participants will use this information to continue back home conversations and discussions commenced during the week in Jerusalem.